conducted in a positive and constructive manner. The ongoing dialogue on security, non-proliferation, disarmament and related issues was continued. Regional developments, counter-terrorism and the visit of President Clinton to India were also discussed.

The two sides agreed to establish a Joint Working Group on Counter-terrorism. They also agreed to work together to ensure that the perpetrators of the hijacking of Indian Airlines Flight IC-814 were brought to justice, as part of joint efforts to combat international terrorism. Both sides agreed on the need to intensify and broaden Indo-American discussions with the goal of crafting a multi-facted partnership and, to this end, agreed to continue with the ongoing dialogue.

ISI'S anti-India Operations from Nepal

45. SHRIMATI KAMLA SINHA: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government had furnished sufficient evidence to the Nepalese Government about the ISI's anti-India operations from Nepal;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) what is the response received from the Government of Nepal in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI JASWANT SINGH): (a) and (b) The Government of India have discussed from time to time with the Government of Nepal our concerns about the ISI misusing the Nepalese territory and the open India-Nepal border for activities inimical to India's interest. Reports received by the Government indicate increasing evidence of ISI using Nepal as a staging post for terrorist activities directed against India and the Nepalese Government have been sensitised on this issue.

(c) The Government of Nepal have assured that their territory would not be used for activities inimical to India's interest and have been extending their cooperation to the Government of India in this

regard. Measures have been taken to enhance bilateral cooperation, particularly with regard to implementing effective border management. The concerned agencies of the two Governments remain in regular touch to coordinate efforts to tackle this problem. There are also bilateral institutional mechanisms, such as the Joint Working Group on Border Mangement and Home Secretary level talks, which have been evolved to specifically develop cooperation on security matters and to address these concerns. In pursuance of the decisions taken in these meetings, both sides have agreed to jointly coordinate measures, including stepping up vigil along the contiguous border districts of India and Nepal, to prevent misuse of the open India-Nepal border to counter activities directed against India.

Nuclear power status to India

46. SHRI RAMDAS AGARWAL: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Nuclear Club continued to be restricted to the five acknowledged nuclear powers *i.e.* United States, Russia, United Kingdom, France and China;

(b) if so, what steps Government have taken, so far, to seek any formal recognition to India's nuclear weapons State status;

(c) what stand Government of India have, so far, taken over the question of signing of CTBT; and

(d) whether Government propose to evolve a national consensus on CTBT by consulting all major political parties in the country?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI JASWANT SINGH): (a) and (b) The United States, Russia, United Kingdom, France and China are described as Nuclear Weapon States (NWSs) under the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) which defines a nuclear-weapon State as "one which has manufactured and exploded a nuclear weapon or other nuclear explosive device prior to 1 January, 1967". Since 1968, India has consistently rejected the NPT as a discriminatory Treaty. After the May, 1998 nuclear tests, the